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Building and Construction Trades Department

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR – CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS
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May 22, 2013

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the nearly 3 million skilled craft professionals who comprise the 13 national and international unions of the Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO, I write to urge your support of H.R. 3, "The Northern Route Approval Act." If enacted, this legislation would allow the construction, operation and maintenance of the Keystone XL pipeline.

America's Building Trades Unions emphatically support the construction of Keystone. Our unions have been actively involved with this project since its inception almost 5 years ago. We are adamant in our belief that the economic, energy security and national security benefits associated with the construction of this pipeline are too important to allow it to be delayed any longer.

The American construction industry has suffered greatly. The national unemployment rate for construction workers remains above 13 percent and far too many of our members have lost homes and are struggling to put food on the table. The Keystone XL project will create tens of thousands of good paying jobs here in the United States and Canada. For many members of our unions, Keystone XL is not just a pipeline; it is, in the most literal sense, a life line.

The Keystone XL has passed every analysis and review and would meet all applicable environmental and safety standards. Additionally, Trans Canada has agreed to implement 57 safety measures above and beyond those mandated by federal agencies relating to the pipeline's construction, operation and design. Further, by embracing a project labor agreement (PLA) TransCanada recognized the value realized through a partnership with America's Building Trades Unions. The Keystone PLA will ensures that the project will offer good wages and benefits and will be built by the safest, most highly trained, and most productive pipeline workforce in the world.

We cannot delay any longer. Congress has spoken with a strong bi-partisan voice time and time again in support of Keystone XL. Support H.R. 3 and let's put American construction workers back to work.

Sincerely,

Sean McGarvey
President